Riots-1931

Alabama

Helpless Are the Negro Leaders

NOT long after the trouble at Scottsboro and Camp Hill in Alabama there comes the tragic news of trouble in the Black Belt of Chicago All these tragedies have been concocted out of stupid race prejudices frightful misery due to extreme poverty and the present depression and the ensuing unemployment. Negro World 8-22-31

It is no use throwing all the blame on the Communists. In the opinion of the Negro World the "reds" are simply a secondary thing. What we mean by it is that if there was no race prejudice, if there was no dire poverty, if the unemployed and the needy had been properly taken care of by society, the Communists would not have had a chance to start any mischief among the Negroes. And it is also no use accusing the Communists of starting the "trouble", for to start trouble is their sole occupation.

In connection with the Chicago "red riots," the New York Herald-Tribune gave a solution that would not do much credit to its editors. It said, in effect, that it was up to the Negro leaders to see that the Communists must not reach the average Negro and that they could keep their flock in "peace and contentment," only if they would.

What the Herald Tribune forgets is that what the average Negro needs is not good advice nor nicely worded programs, but bread to eat, money to pay rents, and work to earn money. None of these so-called Negro leaders are in a position to supply their followers with these. For the Negro leader is the most pathetic leader, a leader without power nor resources to make his leadership count for something.

It is plain then that the community in which the Negro grows more and more embittered every day should undertake to relieve his hardships first, in which, of course, the Negro leader can co-operate All cursing should be left until such time when prosperity will come back.

In the meantime, the City government of Chicago under Mayor Cermack is following a right course in seeking to give relief to the needy Negro families, together with other destitutes.

Responsibility for Alabama Riot Laid to Whites

9-30-31

New York.—Reports made by responsible parties in Alabama to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People reveal new information concerning the race riot at Camp Hill, Ala., on July 16. Two white men and one Negro from Chattanooga, reputed to be a Communist organizer, went to Camp Hill recently and formed an organization of Negroes ostensibly to protest against share cropping. It is revealed that these organizers wrote, or caused to be written, in the minute books of the newly-formed organization that its name should be "The Society for the Advancement of Colored People."

When rumors began to be circulated that the organization was for the purpose of killing or doing harm to officials, and when serious consequences threatened, the two white men are reported to have departed from the vicinity hastily, leaving the Negro organizer to "complete the organization."

In the subsequent trouble of July 16th one Negro was killed, a number were injured and 34 are in prison.

The National Association f[or] the Advancement of Colored People has requested its attorneys in Alabama to act in defending the 34 imprisoned Negroes who appear to be innocent dupes. The charges against them range from assault with intent to murder and conspiracy to murder down to carrying concealed weapons.

The N. A. A. C. P. is continuing its investigation and will do everything it can to protect the misled Negroes. In announcing this the Association issued a statement that the outbreak is precisely what has been feared would happen as the result of empty and childish threats made in connection with the Scottsboro cases, which can do nothin else but gravely increase the difficulties of saving the eight boys sentenced to death in April.

Rioting Negroes Held In Opelika

8-21-31

OPELIKA, ALA., Aug. 20—(Special) —Ten negroes were arrested by Sheriff Jones in different sections of Lee County this afternoon for firing on the highway at a salesman, for abusing members of a white planter's family and for drunkeness.

Sheriff Jones received a call at 2:30 p.m. that three negroes were shooting with pistols and guns up and down the Waverly Highway, three miles from the city.

A travelling salesman, whose identity the officers did not learn, was said to have been deliberately fired upon by the negroes. It was reported that several of the random shots barely missed the salesman, who fled for his life.

Sheriff Jones and his deputies disarmed the negroes and brought them to the County Jail here.

Just as the doors of the prison clanged behind these negroes, Sheriff Jones had a call from A. Vaughan, Lee County planter living in the Gentry Hill Section, that seven negroes were drunk and abusing members of his family, and using vile and profane language.

The officers sped to the scene and took all of the negroes into custody. They were placed in jail about 4 p.m.

RACE RIOT IN ALABAMA ONLY FALSE RUMOR

Reports of Meetings, Machine Guns, Soldiers, Untrue.

9-5-31

8 IN PRISON

Presence of Scottsboro Boys Makes Feeling Tense.

BOHUNK, Ala.—Wild rumors that there was to be bloody race riots and that mobs of men were holding meetings to descend upon certain sections of the city proved to be false whispers of three white men, according to statements of officials here this week.

Although it is admitted that the presence of the Scottsboro boys and the publicity which has been given them have made a tense situation police investigation of rumors that trouble was brewing proved in every case to be either malicious or thoughtlessly repeated falsehoods.

White Workers

One of the first rumors circulated last week, according to a statement made by Mayor Gunter, was a story that a thousand colored men and women were holding a mass meeting and threatening to "do somehting." When police reached the scene three minutes later, they found ten or twelve young boys and girls waiting for a bus to carry them to a marathon dance.

Another white man was found circulating a story that machine guns were being shipped to colored citizens in caskets. When he was hailed into the Mayor's office and confronted with men who heard him make the vile statement, he declared that "they had misunderstood him."

It was also circulated that carloads of dynamite were coming into the city to be placed in the hands of colored people and that hundreds of them were arming themselves for a general disturbance. All of these rumors have proved to be untrue according to officials who made investigations.

Situation Tense

Because of these rumors and the presence of the Scottsboro boys there has been a generally tense situation hre. The nine boys are in the Kilby Prison.

Not on case of violence, it is said, has been traced to any colored citizen. Last week several drunken white boys were driving a car which backfired repeatedly. This noise caused a rumor to go throughout the city tha there had been a race riot.

Halt Wild Rumors

The mayor took stern means o curbing some of these rumors whe he had hailed before him three whit men whom he placed in jail.

Shortly after the rumor of a rio circulated about the town an AFRO AMERICAN correspondent wen through the principal streets an found conditions normal. In an inter view with Grover Hall, white, edito of the Montgomery Advertiser, an with the Mayor, the AFRO-AMERI CAN correspondent was told tha there was no need for apprehension.

Depression Seen

That the financial depression i worrying officials and citizens her is evident. The mayor nad to discharge 24 street workers last week nad warrants made out by some o the State departments are not being honored.

Tom Heflin is still waging a fight to win his seat back in the Senate. It is feared that the school board will order a shorter school term as a result of lack of funds and there may be a cut in teachers' pay.

Watermelons are selling for as low as 50 cents per dozen. Despite the evident depression many people are indulging in the more frivolous diversions. Dancing, gambling, the drinking of bootleg whiskey and other amusements go on apace.

Riots-1931

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.
TIMES-HERALD

NOV 25 1931

Orange County Riots

The year of 1863 was a turbulant one in Newburgh and Port Jervis. At Newburgh a Negro was taken from the jail and lynched for an attack on an Irish girl. Twelve persons were later fined and two went to prison for three months each for the lynching. A few weeks later a riot broke out in Port Jervis because an old Erie conductor discharged an Irishman. A half dozen men of that nationality were shot, one fatally, in the fight which developed.

Historical

Houston

Riots-1931

LAST "HOUSTON MARTYR" MAY GET PAROLE

9-25-31

Washington

Stewart Phillips Escaped In 1923; Captured and Returned to Pen, 1929

NEW YORK.—The last member of the 24th Infantry imprisoned for taking part in the 1917 Houston riot, will be eligible for parole and release from Leavenworth Penitentiary, if the recommendation of Warden T. B. White is accepted in Washington.

The prisoner, Stewart Phillips appealed to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, saying that he had escaped from prison in 1923 and been recaptured in 1929, as a result of which he had lost the "good time" which would have made possible commutation of his jail term.

The N. A. A. C. P., corresponding with Sanford Bates, Director of the federal Bureau of Prisons, with Attorney T. W. Bell in Leavenworth, and with Warden White has obtained from Warden White the statement that he had recommended restoration of the prisoner's "good time."

The N. A. A. C. P. followed the cases of the "Houston Martyrs" from the time of the riot in 1917, sending an investigator to the scene, furnishing the men with counsel, and presenting petitions signed by hundreds of thousands of names to successive Presidents, bringing about the release of all the life and long term prisoners, of whom Stewart Phillips is the last.

Last Of Houston "Martyrs" Ready For Parole Now

10-17-31

NEW YORK—The last member of the 24th Infantry imprisoned for taking part in the 1917 Houston riot, will be eligible for parole and release from Leavenworth Penitentiary, if the recommendation of Warden T. B. White is accepted in Washington.

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Seek Release of Last of Houston Rioters

10-26-31

New York, Sept. 25.—(CNS)—The N. A. A. C. P. announced last week that Stewart Phillips, last member of the 24th Infantry to be imprisoned for his part in the Houston riots of 1917, was now eligible for parole if

Riots-1931

Indiana

RACE RIOT LOOMS IN INDIANAPOLIS OVER POLICE BRUTALITY

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Aug. 5.—A serious clash between white police officers and a crowd of over 500 colored citizens was narrowly averted last Friday, when a crowd of onlookers was incensed by the ruthless brutality of two white policemen in arresting Cecil Vorhees, 21 years old, because the boy refused to move on when the officers ordered him to do so.

Te affair occurred in front of the Walker building on Indianapolis avenue, the threat of a violent outbreak became so insistent that every available police officer in the city was rushed to the scene, and with saw-off shot-guns, black jacks, and ear gas bombs in evidence, made a futile effort to disperse the crowd.

Resents Brutality

The incident arose when Police Officers Allen O'Neal and Jim Beaver, both white, came up to where Vorhees was sitting on the running board of a car, parked in front of the Walker drug store, and ordered him to "Scram." When the boy hesitated, and demanded to know why he should be chased away, O'Neal became vilely abusive, despite the presence of several women and children standing nearby. The policeman whipped out his black jack and grabbed for Vorhees, who grabbed his arm and hit the officer a crashing blow on the chin, which knocke him to the ground. O'Neal scrambled to his feet and he and Beaver began to tussle with Vorhees who fought and kicked until he was overpowered by a blow on the head. The affair had been witnessed by a score of persons, and some of the men pressed forward and warned the officers not to hit the boy again.

Sends Riot Call

As the crowd increased rapidly, an evidence of resentment against the action of the officers became apparent, O'Neal left Vorheese in charge of Bever, and raced to the police telephone ,where he sent in a riot call. While waiting for the police reinforcemnts, the crowd began to revile the police, to jostle them around, and some of the men called for assistance to help take Vorhees from them. This action was halted by the arrival of several squad cars and patrol wagons with police.. The officers jumped from their cars with guns, black jacks and tear bombs in hand, and roughly ordered the crowds to disperse, but they stood their ground. Several men were struck by the police, and two officers were disarmed by the crowd. Andrew Thomas, a clerk in the drug store, was arrested when he came to the door to watch the disturbance. One of the officers fired his shot gun above the heads of the crowd in a futile effort to frighten them away, but two of the slugs wounded Eugene Harris, who was taken to the hospital. Five men were arrested, and the police left with the prisoners before the crowd dispersed.

Riots-1931

Missouri.

NEW YORK AMERICAN

JAN 19 1931

Negroes' Revenge Raid of Town Fails

MARYVILLE, Mo., Jan. 18 (INS).—The expected sacking of Maryville by a mob of colored men, reported marching on the town early today to avenge the lynching last Monday of Raymond Gunn, slayer of Velma Colter, young school teacher, failed to materialize.

Near panic reigned in the town last night, following circulation of the report of a precautionary measure, two units of the State militia were ordered mobilized by Governor Caulfield at the request of Mayor Garrett.

NEW YORK AMERICAN

JAN 18 1931

TOWN IN ARMS AFTER LYNCHING

MARYVILLE, Mo., Jan. 17 (AP). —Alarmed by an unsubstantiated report tonight that five automobile loads of negroes were en route to Marryville to avenge the death of Raymond Gunn, negro, lynched January 12. A company of the National Guard was called out and citizens, heavily armed, patrolled the streets.

The guardsmen were ordered mobilizer by Governor Cauffield after Mayor Garritt had reported he expected trouble.

Practically every home in this city bristled into a fortress as families prepared to defend themselves. The negroes were said to be en route from St. Joseph and Kansas City.

No one was able to say where the rumor started. Within less than an hour, however, every section of the town had been notified and word had gone out to Jefferson City and St. Joseph to send aid.

A basketball game being played between the Maryville State Teachers' College and Central College was no more than over than the entire rooting section stormed a hardware store and seized every available weapon and all the ammunition carried in stock.

Sheriff Harve England, from whom Gunn was seized while the negro was being taken to the courtroom for trial, emptied the county jail of all its prisoners. He said he believed the jail would be the scene of violence if any occurred.

RAID PREVENTS NEGRO EXODUS

Macon Telegraph
1-4-31
Macon, Ga.

Thirteen Men Arrested as Result of Prompt Action

CARUTHERSVILLE, Mo., Feb. 3 (AP)—Pemiscot county authorities believed today that a sudden raid and 13 arrests had halted what County Jailer J. A. Johnson called an effort to drive Negroes from the Wardell community, near here.

Reports of explosions and de[struc]tion of property near Wardell [in] southeastern Missouri town about 40 miles from Caruthersville, have reached this county seat for two weeks. When Sheriff Pete Robertson heard that telephone wires had been cut, he led a party of deputies to Wardell.

Thirteen Are Held

Thirteen men, mostly farmers, were arrested and charged with dynamiting personal property and molesting telephone facilities. They were held under $5,000 bonds. Preliminary hearings were set for Friday.

Johnson said today a few Negroes left the community, but most of them "are satisfied since we've arrested this bunch." None was injured in explosions which wrecked two houses and an automobile.

The jailer said a scarcity of jobs gave rise to anti-Negro feeling which he declared was not shared by most white people of the section.

SIX STE. GENEVIEVE RIOTERS PAROLED

White Men Admit They Forced Colored Persons To Flee From Town In S. E. Missouri

Argus

BOTHER MAIL CARRIER

4-3-31

Government Took Action In Case Of Louis Ribeau, A Postal Worker, Who Was A Victim

St. Louis, Mo.

Immediate paroles were granted six white men by Federal Judge Davis Saturday after they had pleaded guilty of having conspired to force Louis Ribeau, mail carrier, to leave Ste. Genevieve, Mo., during a racial uprising last Oct. 14, and being sentenced to 30 days in jail.

Drove Out Old Citizens

The outbreak with which the men were connected was one of the most lawless that has occurred in southeast Missouri. Whites, enraged by a slaying of two white men by two colored men during a fight over a colored woman, visited all of the colored persons' homes and ordered them out of town. Many of them the oldest residents, had to leave town hurriedly. Ribeau remained behind and fled only when a gang of white men visited his home after threats had been made against his life. The six men held were said to have been among the would-be lynchers.

Ask Leniency

After the men's attorney and Assistant United States Attorney Dyer had pleaded for leniency for them, Judge Davis granted the paroles telling them "I hope you boys try to keep things quiet down there instead of stirring them up."

The six were H. E. Steiger, Louis Ryan, William Martin, J. O. Crowley, James Hurt and Russell Stokely.

Since the trouble, most of the colored families have returned to Genieveve and have had little trouble from the white people.

Riots - 1931.

New Jersey

JERSEY TROOPS STOP RACE RIOT IN BOY'S PRISON

Recorder
2-7-31

Nine Injured In Free-For-All Reformatory Combat— Inmates Escape During Confusion.

Indianapolis
Indiana

ANNANDALE, N. J., Feb. 6.—After a race riot which broke out Wednesday of last week, among the 400 white and colored boys of the New Jersey state reformatory for boys nine inmates of the institution were missing and nine others were injured seriously.

The fighting between the boys is said to have started in one of the cottages in which the boys are housed. The combat quickly spread to the others and to the unwalled yard. State ponce arrived on the scene in time to save the situation with which the unarmed were unable to cope. All except nine of the boys who escaped during the confusion returned to the reformatory.

Investigation is said to have revealed that ill feeling had been evident between the white and colored inmates for some time. A fight started between two of the boys Wednesday night of last week during the study hour in a cottage which contained about 60 inmates and four guards. One of the combantants was colored and the other white. Within a few seconds all the other boys in the room had joined the battle. Windows were broken, the doors torn from their hinges, chairs and tables broken up for clubs, and a fire hose was cut into sections and used as a weapon.

The fight spread out into the yard and soon inmates from all the other cottages had joined in the free-for-all. The riot was subdued by troops called from nearby stations.

Riots-1931

New York.

SPEEDY ARRIVAL OF POLICE HALTS NEW YORK RACE RIOT

Telegraph 10-17-31

NEW YORK, Oct. 16.—A dispute between pedestrians of both races at Eighth Ave. and 118th St., Wednesday night, which started when a group of boys threw several milk bottles onto the sidewalks from the roofs of nearby houses, grew so heated that a serious race riot was prevented only by prompt arrival of police reserves from the W. 123d St. station and emergency squad 5 from the W. 152d St. station.

Chicago.

Apparently the boys responsible for the near riot were merely trying to have fun and were seeking a thrill with the pedestrians when they started to throw milk bottles from the housetops on the northwest corner of the intersection.

Pedestrians Escape Injury

But several white pedestrians narrowly escaping injury from the bottles inferred that they were objects of an interracial attack when they looked up and saw their assailants were members of the Race.

Enraged, a half dozen white men started to dash into one of the buildings, loudly proclaiming their intentions of pursuing and thrashing the bottle-hurlers. At this point several of our people, apparently believing that the white group were threatening the boys too vehemently, intervened and prevented them from entering the building.

Police Riot Squad Called

The shouts accompanying the argument which followed attracted the attention of a large crowd, including spectators of both races who knew nothing of the cause of the dispute but were apparently prepared to get into a battle on general principles.

As the throng milled about the street an alarm was sent to the W. 123d St. station and reserves were dispatched to the scene. They promptly dispersed the would-be rioters, and by the time the emergency squad arrived the nearby streets were practically cleared.

Bloody Harlem Race Riot By Thousands Nipped By Timely Arrival of Large Reserve Squad

New York News

10-18-31

scene of battle.

A dispute between white and colored pedestrians which was started when some colored boys threw several bottles onto the sidewalk from the roofs of nearly houses, grew heated.

Apparently the boys responsible for the near-outbreak were merely seeking the thrill of making pedestrians 'dance' on the sidewalks when they started throwing bottles from the housetops on the nee north-west corner of the intersection.

But several white pedestrians, narrowly escaping injury from the bottles, inferred that they were the objects of an inter-racial attack when they looked up and saw their assailants were colored.

Spectators Join Melee

Enraged, a half dozen white men started to dash into one of the buildings, loudly proclaiming their intention of pursuing and thrashing the bottle hurlers. At this point several colored passerbys, apparently believing that the white group were threatening the boys too vehemently, intervened and prevented them from entering the building.

Milk Bottles Thrown from Roof Tops of Newly Opened Section Brings Hordes of Both Races to Open Hostle Combat

New York, N.Y.

The entire reserve squad and emergency police squad of Harlem who used their clubs widely and prepared to shoot prevented on Wednesday evening the bloodiest race riot Harlem has ever known. The streets centering around 118th street and 8th avenue, were crowded with thousands of both race drawn to the

Riots-1931

South Carolina

BROOKLYN, N. Y.
EAGLE
Riots
JUN 30 1931

A Worthy Negro Lawyer.

On the morning of July 9, 1876, a bright Sunday morning at Hamburg, South Carolina, a Negro boy two years old was probably sucking his thumbs and wondering what all the noise was about. His father, who had been a slave, knew. Twenty-five Negro militiamen had been made prisoners by the Butler Vigilantes. Five of them, one at a time, were deliberately taken out and shot to death. The Hamburg Massacre was going on, of which M. C. Butler, afterward a United States Senator, wrote: "How many were killed or how they were killed I do not know. Many things were done on this terrible night which of course cannot be justified, but the Negroes sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind." The crime of the militiamen had been blocking the highways to a member of the Butler family. Incidentally this terrorism four months before the disputed Presidential election of 1876 led to the throwing out of the returns from the Hamburg precinct, where the Negroes had not dared to vote.

The little Negro boy learned many things about race relations as he grew up. He went to the high school in Atlanta. At 23 he graduated at Howard University. He became a teacher in Haines Institute and started a daily newspaper called The South. Later he saw a broader future in the North. He came to Brooklyn. He had a print shop and published a weekly, The Brooklyn Eye. He was graduated at the Brooklyn Law School in 1916. For a few months he was an Assistant District Attorney of Kings County—from January, 1923, to March, 1924. He died Saturday at the home of his brother, 1717 Bergen Street.

Sumner H. Lark's career was a worthy one. He never sought to emphasize or embitter racial controversies. He was liked and respected by white lawyers. A founder of the Negro Y. M. C. A. in Brooklyn, a devout member of the Siloam Presbyterian Church, active in the organization of the Negro Elks, he had fathered a development known as Larksburg, near Peekskill, where he will be buried. This was never a commercial development; always operated for the benefit of the Negro race. Sumner H. Lark, native of the town the Hamburg Massacre made famous, cannot be forgotten when the records of Negro progress are compiled. Honesty, keenness and capability make good in spite of color prejudice in America.